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Old California Missions.

Photographed by W. B. Tyler.

Published by H. S. Crocker & Co.
San Francisco, 1889.

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Old California Missions.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MISSION AT SAN DIEGO, July 16th, 1769, marks the laying of the corner-stone of civilization in California. This was the work of the good Father Junipero Serra, who also founded most of the Missions during the next ten years. This Mission is ten miles from the present City, is in a ruinous condition, and will probably last but a few years longer. It is unoccupied and services are no longer held there; the surrounding country being leased to fruit raisers and sheep herders.

Next comes the MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, which was almost entirely destroyed by earthquake, during divine service, in 1812. Many lives were lost, but the church records do not give the number. The silver-toned bells still remain and are rung daily by the old padre. These bells contain about five per cent of silver and have a particularly sweet tone. Within the last few years several of the mission bells have been melted for their intrinsic value,

but those of Santa Barbara, San Miguel, San Fernando, San Diego and San Juan Capistrano are still intact.

Seven miles southeast of Los Angeles is the MISSION SAN GABRIEL. Services are still held in this church; but aside from that it is uninteresting, being the least picturesque of all the Missions, and bearing more resemblance to a modern sacred edifice.

Forty miles north of Los Angeles, and near the railroad, lies the MISSION SAN FERNANDO. It is rapidly falling into decay, no effort being made to preserve its original appearance. The fountain in the illustration was carved by the Indian workers of that time, and is remarkably well preserved. In beauty, however, it does not compare with the fountain at Santa Barbara.

Further north is the MISSION SAN BUENAVENTURA. It has no feature to distinguish it from any Spanish building of that period. Services are still held there.

We now come to the MISSION of SANTA BARBARA, undoubtedly the best preserved of all. It is, in fact, a monastery, occupied by the old Franciscan Friars. Some twenty monks live in the buildings; and the illustration given is from a photograph taken during the present year in the interior garden. A curious fact exists in connection with this garden,—following monastic rule, no woman has been allowed to enter it. This rule has been strictly observed, with but one exception. When the Princess Louise visited this monastery some few years ago, even the old monks could not resist, but allowed her to enter the garden. It is said, however, they have never forgiven themselves this breach of discipline, and for months after the

ground was daily sprinkled with holy water. Santa Barbara Mission is being constantly repaired, and is losing its picturesqueness, but it bids fair to last for another hundred years.

The Mission San Luis Obispo has been entirely modernized and rebuilt, and is, therefore, uninteresting. The illustration is from a sketch before the restoration.

The Mission San Miguel lies thirty miles from San Luis Obispo. It is in a fair state of preservation regarding the main buildings, though the out-buildings are gradually crumbling away. It was founded in 1797.

North of San Miguel, and west of Salinas Valley, lies the Jolone Valley. At the head of this Valley lies the Mission San Antonio of Padua. The illustration gives a fair idea of its present condition. For almost twenty years it has been entirely deserted, but lately some steps have been taken to restore it. It is remarkably picturesque, and a visit is well worth the twenty miles of hard driving over the mountains. It lies on the line of the railroad, north of San Miguel.

The next Mission is that of San Carmelo, or Carmel, as it is commonly called. It is some six miles distant from the town of Monterey, and has lately been restored. As a ruin this Mission was extremely beautiful.

Still north, and to the east, is the Mission San Bautista. The main building has been displaced by a modern church.

The Mission Santa Ynez lies between Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, near the town of Lompoc; being distant from any railroad it is seldom visited by tourists. It is in a fair state of preservation; and the illustration gives a good idea of its general appearance.

South of San Francisco this comprises all the Missions near the line of the railroad. San Carlo has long ceased to exist, and the same may be said of Missions San Jose, Salinas and Purissima.

Of those north of San Francisco very little remains. At San Francisco is the Mission Dolores. The Mission itself is little more than a chapel, but the old graveyard is remarkably interesting.

They are crumbling and decaying rapidly; and while the information as to their condition is at the present time correct, within five years important repairs will have to be made, or before that time several of them will have crumbled entirely away. The illustrations in this volume are all from photographs taken in the present year, 1889.

In presenting this volume to the public, we trust it will lead to renewed interest in the subjects contained therein, and cause active measures to be promptly taken for the preservation of these buildings—being one of the most attractive and curious features of the Pacific Coast.

SAN FRANCISCO,

September 2nd, 1889.

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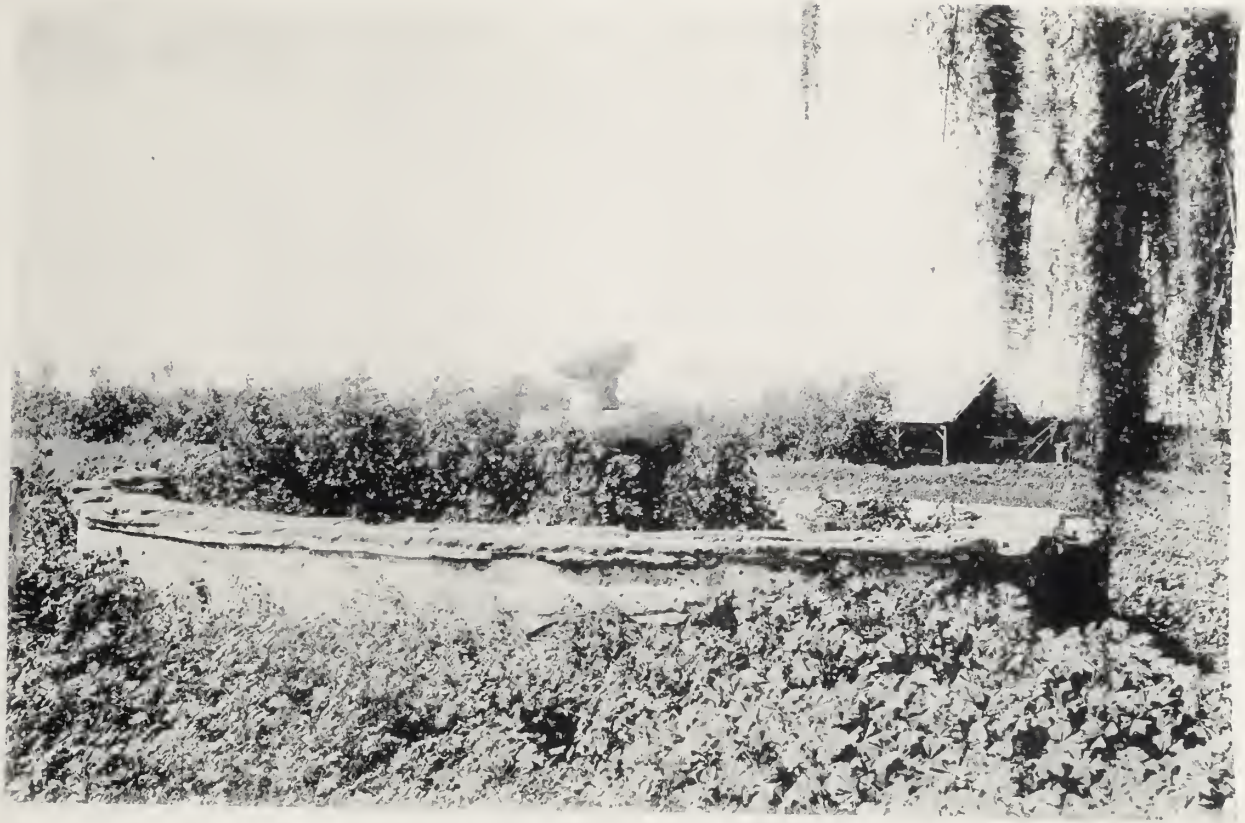
Old Mission Bells.

San Diego and San Gabriel.

San Juan Capistrano.

San Fernando.



Fountain at San Fernando.

San Buenaventura.

Santa Barbara.

Franciscan Monks, Santa Barbara.

San Luis Obispo.

San Miguel.

Corridor at San Miguel.

San Antonio of Padua.

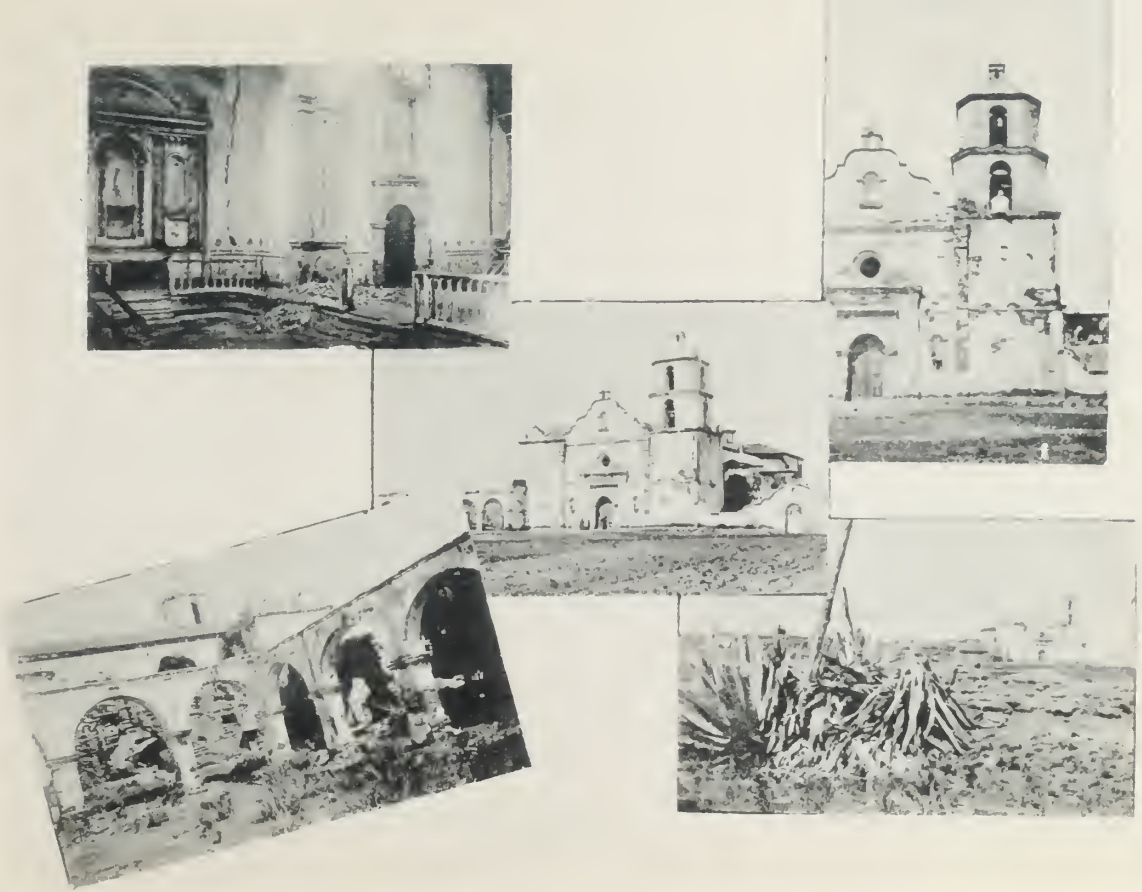
San Antonio of Padua.

Corridor at San Antonio.

Dolores and Carmel.

San Juan Bautista.

Santa Clara and Santa Ynez.



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